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## **Stamas Bill Prohibits State from Charging for Public Information**

*Agencies and departments would be barred from using 900 numbers*

State Senator Tony Stamas, R-Midland, this week introduced Senate Bill 180, which would prohibit state government agencies and departments from using fee telephone numbers to charge callers who want to access public information.

Currently, some state agencies, including the Department of Lottery as well as the Department of Consumer and Industry Services, charge as much as \$1.50 per minute to access public information. A Michigan chiropractor filed a class action lawsuit last year against three last year state agencies claiming they violated Michigan's Freedom of Information Act. That lawsuit is now awaiting action by the Michigan Court of Appeals.

"Hard-working, tax-paying residents should not have to pay phone charges to get information that would otherwise be free; and state agencies and departments should not be profiting from it," said Stamas. "My bill forbids the state from collecting this type of income from Michigan's citizens."

Senate Bill 180 will now go to the Senate Committee on Local, Urban and State Affairs for consideration.